

Message Text

SECRET

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44

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W
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O P 151520Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0533

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

USMISSION NATO

S E C R E T NICOSIA 4049

EXDIS

DEPT PASS CINCEUR USDOCOSOUTH USEUCOM

BEIRUT FOR RCAA

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR CY TU UK

SUBJECT: AEROFLOT OFFER TO CYPRUS AIRWAYS; NICOSIA AIRPORT REOPENING

1. AMBASSADOR CHECKED WITH UK HIGH COMMISSIONER OLVER NOVEMBER 15 ON CURRENT STATUS OF UK EFFORTS BLOCK CONCLUSION OF FAR-REACHING ACCORD BETWEEN AEROFLOT AND CYPRUS AIRWAYS, AND MAKE PROGRESS ON RELATED PROBLEM OF NICOSIA AIRPORT REOPENING.

2. OLVER SAID CYPRUS AIRWAYS TEAM HEADED BY DIRECTOR SAVVA DEPARTING FOR MOSCOW NOV 16 AND THIS WAS A BAD OMEN. HOWEVER, SAVVA HAD ASSURED UK HIGH COMMISSIONER THAT HIS OBJECT WOULD BE TO EXPLORE RAMIFICATIONS OF AEROFLOT OFFER AND REPORT BACK TO GOC, NOT TO CONCLUDE ANYTHING DURING HIS VISIT. ALSO, BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FOR LONDON, FONMIN CHRISTOPHIDES REITERATED TO OLVER HIS ASSURANCE THAT GOC WOULD CHOOSE A WESTERN FIRM IF OFFER COMPARABLE TO AEROFLOT'S WERE RECEIVED.

2. OLVER HAS REQUESTED VISIT TO NICOSIA NEXT WEEK BY UK

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REGIONAL CIVAIR ATTACHE IN BEIRUT HOPEFULLY ARMED WITH FULL

INFORMATION ON BRITISH MIDLANDS OFFER AND COMPARABILITY DATA ON UK VERSUS SOVIET AIRCRAFT WHICH MIGHT BE EMPLOYED. ALSO, OLVER HAS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED UK DISCUSSIONS WITH GOT IN ANKARA.

3. AMBASSADOR MADE FOUR COMMENTS: (A) ON OCTOBER 13, CLERIDES HAD INFORMED HIM THAT IN ANSWER TO CRITICISM OF YAK-40, AEROFLOT HAD COME UP WITH PROPOSAL FOR USE OF A LARGER, MORE SOPHISTICATED SHORT-TAKEOFF AIRCRAFT. CYPRUS PRESS, IN WHICH AEROFLOT OFFER HAS NOW PREDICTABLY BEEN SURFACED, REFERRED ON FOLLOWING DAY TO OFFER OF TU-124. (B) IN SAME CONVERSATION, CLERIDES HAD STATED THAT HE COULD ACCEPT LEAVING AIRPORT PERIMETER DEFENSE NOW DE FACTO IN HANDS OF UN AND MAINLAND TURKISH TROOPS, "AS IS" FOR DURATION OF ANY INTERIM AGREEMENT ON AIRPORT REOPENING. THIS COULD CONCEIVABLY BE WORKED OUT WITH GOT. (C) UK HAD IT WITHIN ITS POWER TO DEFLECT CONSIDERATION OF AEROFLOT AGREEMENT OFFER OF TEMPORARY USE OF AKROTIRI BY CYPRUS AIRWAYS. GOC UNDERSTOOD UK MOD WAS WILLING, FCO OPPOSED. (D) A SENIOR CYPRUS AIRWAYS OFFICIAL, COMMENTING ON SAVVA TRIP TO MOSCOW, HAD TOLD EMBOFF NOVEMBER 14 THAT AEROFLOT OFFER FAR SUPERIOR TO ANY OTHER PROPOSAL AND HAD TO BE SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED BY GOC.
CRAWFORD

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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NNN

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